

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 15, 2020

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House
U.S. House of Representatives
H-232, U.S. Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
H-204, U.S. Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi and Minority Leader McCarthy,

As members of the San Diego Congressional delegation, we urge you to consider the inclusion of zoos, aquariums, and museums in upcoming COVID-19 economic relief legislation.

For the first time in their 103-year history, the San Diego Zoo and the San Diego Zoo Safari Park were forced to close their doors to the public in the wake of COVID-19. With this unprecedented closure, the zoo is still incurring significant expenses to care for its animals and plants, including many who are threatened or endangered, as well as those of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, without revenue to mitigate costs. The parks house more than 6,500 animals of more than 950 species and a renowned botanical collection representing more than 700,000 exotic plants.

During normal operations, San Diego Zoo Global's (SDZG) economic impact is an estimated \$1.7 billion annually, employing 3,000 Californians, and indirectly contributing to more than 14,000 jobs in San Diego. Additionally, the zoo is one of the largest tourist attractions in the region. Last year alone, the San Diego Zoo and the San Diego Zoo Safari Park together welcomed more than 5 million visitors.

Unfortunately, this economic activity has been severely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, which now threatens the zoo's operations, the animals they care for, and the jobs of many of our constituents. To sustain base operations during this challenging time, SDZG requires the aid of our federal government until they can once again serve as the economic engine of our community.

As the legislative response to COVID-19 continues to rapidly evolve, we urge you to prioritize three critical needs:

- Lift the caps on the Paycheck Protection Program offered through SBA's 7(a) Loan Program to include nonprofit organizations with more than 500 employees.
- Allocate at least an additional \$1,000,000,000 to the Institute of Museum and Library Services to support zoos, aquariums, and museums in preventing, preparing, and responding to COVID-19.

- Expand the universal charitable deduction provision in the CARES Act by removing the \$300 cap.

These provisions are urgent to not only SDZG, but the greater zoo, aquarium, and museum community — many of which are not-for-profit organizations. By addressing these critical needs, we can ensure these cherished educational and cultural institutions can continue their efforts, even as they remain closed.

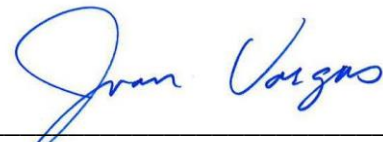
The recent passage of the CARES Act marked a momentous step towards assisting those hardest hit by COVID-19. While we understand the magnitude of the need on many fronts, we believe it is imperative that Congress ensure zoos and other nonprofits are accounted for in upcoming legislation so these organizations can weather the damage caused by COVID-19 and can continue to give back to our community.

We thank you for your consideration and attention to these critical matters.

Sincerely,



SUSAN A. DAVIS
Member of Congress



JUAN VARGAS
Member of Congress



SCOTT PETERS
Member of Congress



MIKE LEVIN
Member of Congress